

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 IO-12 ADP-00 T-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 INR-09 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-14 USIA-12 RSR-01 CU-04 /120 W
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R 120955 Z MAR 73

FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3366
INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 193

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SF

SUBJ: RACE RELATIONS INSTITUTE MAY FOLLOW CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE'S
REFUSAL TO TESTIFY BEFORE PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION

REF: (A) STATE 044817, (B) CAPE TOWN 190

1. ACTION COMMITTEE OF SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS
(SAIRR) SCHEDULED MEET TODAY (MARCH 12) IN JOHANNESBURG TO DISCUSS
ATTITUDE TOWARD PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMISSION'S (SCHLEBUSCH
COMMISSION) INVESTIGATION INTO ITS ACTIVITIES. ACTION COMMITTEE
IS EMPOWERED MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL EXECUTIVE OF INSTITUTE.

2. MEETING FOLLOWS ANNOUNCEMENT THAT MEMBERS OF MANAGEMENT
BOARD
AND EXECUTIVE OF CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE (CI) DECIDED EARLIER NOT TO
GIVE EVIDENCE BEFORE COMMISSION OR COOPERATE WITH IT. SAIRR
DIRECTOR FRED VAN WYK IS ALSO MEMBER OF CI'S MANAGEMENT BOARD.
COMMISSION IS CONSTITUTED IN TERMS OF COMMISSIONS ACT OF 1947
WHICH PROVIDES FOR MAXIMUM PENALTIES OF 100 RAND (APPROX. \$142)
OR SIX MONTHS IMPRISONMENT FOR WITNESSES WHO FAIL TO GIVE
EVIDENCE WHEN CALLED ON BY CHAIRMAN.
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3. TEXT OF CI LETTER TO SCHLEBUSCH COMMISSION AS PUBLISHED IN MARCH 11 SUNDAY TIMES READS AS FOLLOWS:

" DURING THE MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, HELD OVER THE WEEKEND OF MARCH 2-4, THE PENDING INVESTIGATION OF THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE BY A PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMISSION WAS DISCUSSED.

" A NUMBER OF BOARD AND EXECUTIVE STAFF MEMBERS STATED THAT THEY COULD NOT IN CONSCIENCE PARTICIPATE IN THIS INVESTIGATION. THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

"1. THAT THE RECENT ACTION TAKEN AGAINST STUDENT LEADERS BY WAY OF ARBITRARY BANNING ORDERS CONFIRMS OUR INITIAL IMPRESSION THAT THE THINKING BEHIND THE APPOINTMENT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEE IS CALCULATED TO PERMIT PUNITIVE MEASURES BEING TAKEN UNDER THE GUISE OF DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURE.

" 2. THAT WE REAFFIRM OUR CONVICTION THAT THE INVESTIGATION OF ANY ORGANISATION SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN THROUGH A JUDICIAL COMMISSION WHICH CAN ENSURE IMPARTIALITY, THE RIGHT OF DEFENCE TO ACCUSATIONS MADE, THE RIGHT TO FACE ONE'S ACCUSERS AND THE UPHOLDING OF THE DUE PROCESS OF LAW.

"3. THAT WE FULLY SUPPORT THOSE OF THE BOARD AND STAFF EXECUTIVE WHO DECIDE THAT IN CONSCIENCE THEY CANNOT COOPERATE WITH A COMMISSION OF INQUIRY, WHICH THEY CONSIDER BY ITS CONSTITUTION AND MANDATE TO BE A DENIAL OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS AND JUDICIAL PROCEDURE.

"4. THAT WHILE WE CONFIDENTLY AFFIRM THAT WE HAVE NOTHING TO HIDE, WE ALSO AFFIRM THAT THERE IS MUCH TO PRESERVE BY WAY OF OUR CHRISTIAN HERITAGE OF FAIRNESS AND THE EVIDENCING OF JUSTICE, WHICH SUCH A PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION PALPABLY ERODES."

4. CI DIRECTOR REV. BEYERS NAUDE TOLD SUNDAY TIMES

" I WISH TO MAKE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT THIS IS NOT A POLITICAL DECISION. IT IS RATHER A MATTER OF DEEP MORAL CONVICTION ON THE PART OF THE STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS WHO HAVE TAKEN THE DECISION AND I DEEPLY RESPECT SUCH A STAND." REV. BRIAN BROWN, CI ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR, QUOTED AS CONFIRMING THAT IF AN IMPARTIAL JUDICIAL COMMISSION HAD BEEN SET UP TO INQUIRE INTO ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES OF CI, ITS MEMBERS WOULD NOT HAVE HESITATED TO COOPERATE FULLY.

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973CAPET00193
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730325/aaaahlef.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION L
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 STATE 044817, 73 CAPE TOWN 190
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kellerpr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09-Aug-2001 by maustmc>; APPROVED <15-Aug-2001 by kellerpr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 971118
Subject: RACE RELATIONS INSTITUTE MAY FOLLOW CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE' S REFUSAL TO TESTIFY BEFORE PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION
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To: CAPE TOWN
DURBAN
JOHANNESBURG
L
LONDON
PRETORIA

SECSTATE WASHDC
USUN NEW YORK

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005